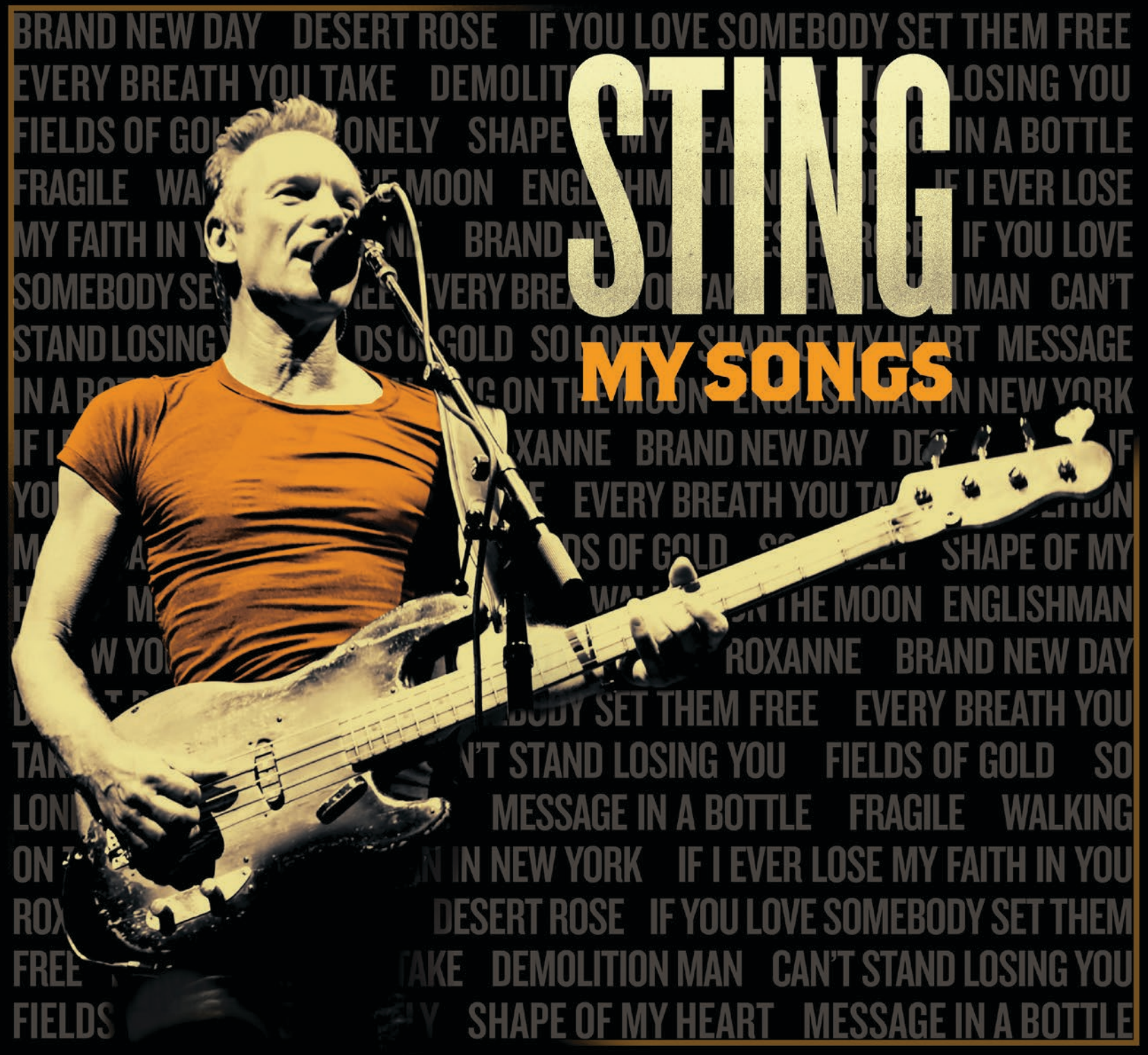
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MY SONGS

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A&R: MARTIN KIERSZENBAUM

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STING MY SONGS

This is my life in songs. Some of them reconstructed, some of them refitted, some of them reframed, and all of them with a contemporary focus.

My long-standing strategy in life has been one of optimism, even in the face of some daunting realities. **BRAND NEW DAY** was written in 1999 well in advance of the millennium and was my personal attempt to allay irrational, existential fears based on arbitrary dates or the alignment of planets, or on the baseless Y2K threat. This is my version of whistling as you walk through the graveyard I suppose, but then what could be more optimistic than Stevie Wonder's harmonica as an accompaniment to the apocalypse? To paraphrase Eliot, these fragments that follow…I have shored against my ruin.

DESERT ROSE was written in 1999 in Paris. I'd spent the summer there listening to and becoming fascinated with the Räi music popular in the clubs frequented by the expatriate Algerian community. I got to know some of the amazing musicians and singers there, some of whom performed on the record. Lyrically it was inspired by Sufi poetry, which often equates devotional and religious longing with the erotic.

IF YOU LOVE SOMEBODY SET THEM FREE was written in early 1985, in a house I moved into in Hampstead in North London that I swear was haunted. It had formerly been a pub in the 18th century, known then as The Three Ducks. I've no idea what went on there over the centuries, but there was a strange atmosphere in the house, not necessarily frightening but definitely uneasy and disturbing. Frank Oz of The Muppets had lived there prior to me, and before that one of Diaghilev's prima ballerinas, Karasova. My intuition at the time was that some energy - something constricted and trapped within the psychic atmosphere of the house - needed to be released. Maybe the song came from this feeling. I moved across the park to Highgate soon after that… there were fewer ghosts.

I brought **EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE** into Utopia Studios in North London late one night in 1982. I'd already written the lyrics while staying at GoldenEye, Chris Blackwell's house outside of Ocho Rios in Jamaica that had formerly belonged to James Bond's creator Ian Fleming. I was working alone at Utopia with the engineer Pete Smith. The music was based on the ninth chords that I'd already used successfully in *Message In A Bottle* and *Da Do Do Do…*, which had become a sort of signature for me. As most rock music is based on fourths, fifths and sevenths, the ninth chord opened up a different world of possibilities and gave this rather simple and strange song a tonal sophistication that it wouldn't have possessed otherwise, effectively complementing its lyrical ambiguity. It still manages to be both sinister and oddly comforting, which might explain its continuing prevalence as one of the most played songs on the radio.

I wrote **DEMOLITION MAN** during the summer of 1980, living in Peter O'Toole's house in Connemara, Ireland. Peter liked the lyrics, especially, "I'm a three-line whip, I'm the sort of thing they ban," a three-line whip being a British parliamentary term for an emergency vote. I never imagined my A-level in the British Constitution would eventually bear fruit in a rock and roll lyric. I sent the demo to Grace Jones, who'd asked me for a song, and she released it successfully as a single in 1981. The Police then recorded it for *Ghost In The Machine*, with me happily riffing the countermelody on my old tenor sax.

Written in my basement flat in Bayswater in 1978, **CAN'T STAND LOSING YOU** is a nasty little revenge fantasy inspired by nothing in particular, apart from the deliberately bratty chords. As in *Every Breath You Take* and *Demolition Man*, there is something cathartic, even therapeutic, in role-playing these less than savoury characters…or maybe they're actually parts of my own subconscious that would otherwise remain hidden.

FIELDS OF GOLD was written in Lake House in the summer of 1992. The house is surrounded by barley fields, and that year a beautiful crop circle appeared one morning. Whoever or whatever accomplished this astounding overnight feat was quite evidently a mathematical genius, whereas some of the more shambolic examples I've seen are clearly the work of drunks after one too many ales in the local pub.

SO LONELY was originally written for my band Last Exit in Newcastle in 1975 and transposed easily into a Police song on the 1978 album *Outlandos d'Amour*. It's odd to be singing about loneliness in this ebullient manner, but maybe that's therapeutic?

SHAPE OF MY HEART was written in 1992 in Lake House. Dominic [Miller] brought this lovely descending minor cadence into the studio, and we spent the morning moulding it into song form. I then took the recording on a long walk, asking the music to tell me a story. A few hours later I returned with the lyrics, explaining to Dominic that I'd found them under a tree.

I wrote the guitar riff for **MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE** on my black Fender Strat in the back of a noisy van heading south on an autobahn between Düsseldorf and Nuremberg sometime in early '79. I immediately knew that I was onto something with this circular riff, starting with an arpeggiated C#9, repeated in A9, then to B9, and finally F#9 resolving back to the beginning. It took me a while to find the right lyrical subject, but after a few false starts back home in my basement in Bayswater, a story emerged from the rising and falling tide of the music of some kind of Robinson Crusoe character stranded on a desert island and throwing a hopeful bottle out to sea. The countless bottles that are washed up in response continue to be a resonant and grateful metaphor in my life, but like all great rock and roll stories, it began with a riff.

The lyrics for **FRAGILE** were written during the recording of *The Dream Of The Blue Turtles* on Barbados in 1985, but I didn't have a suitable musical setting until 1987 when I was living in the Soho neighborhood of New York City, just messing around with some descending sixth chords, similar to the ones I'd used successfully on *Bring On The Night* and later on *Never Coming Home*. These recurrent motifs remind me that all of these songs are composed of the same building blocks of connective musical tissue.

WALKING ON THE MOON was written in the dead of night in a nondescript hotel room in Munich in 1979. I woke from a fitful sleep with this insistent bass riff in my head that wouldn't allow me to return to sleep. Eventually, it would become *Walking On The Moon*, inspired by Neil Armstrong's lunar exploration, but the original lyrics were probably more prosaic – "walking 'round the room," perhaps.

ENGLISHMAN IN NEW YORK was written in my apartment on West Broadway in New York City's Soho in 1987. I spirited myself away there to write, rarely venturing out except to get food. I'd leave Yo-Yo Ma's recording of the Bach cello suites playing quietly on a loop while I slept, and I always managed to wake up refreshed with some notion buzzing in my head - not necessarily anything to do with Bach, but the comforting architecture of his music may have created the space for ideas to emerge. The pizzicato strings of the intro were played on my Synclavier using the same chords as *If You Love Somebody Set Them Free*, ending up somewhere a little more Baroque, which may have had something to do with hearing J.S. Bach all night.

IF I EVER LOSE MY FAITH IN YOU was written in Lake House in 1992, with a growing cynicism about the ability of our political class to tackle what I regarded even then as a menacing existential crisis in the wanton destruction of our delicate biosphere. I won't claim a prescience about the dangers of technology, but doubts about our "miracles" of science allied to militarism are there in the song. Incidentally and ironically, the album *Ten Summoner's Tales* from which the song came was the first successful purchase on the internet on August 11, 1994.

It's fitting that this version of **ROXANNE** is a live recording from Paris' Olympia. The song began its life there in 1977. We were staying in a seedy fleapit of a hotel behind the Gare du Nord, where I conflated the object of Cyrano de Bergerac's romantic love with the working girls in the street below. The cadence of Gm followed by Dm over an F in the bass began to tell me a story that would change my life forever.

- STING

BRAND NEW DAY
Produced and additional instruments by Dave Audé
Additional programming and arranging by Dave Audé
Additional production by Jason Robinson
Engineered by Dave Audé
Original elements produced by Sting and Kipper
Vocals, Bass, Vg-8 Guitar Synth: Sting
Keyboards, Drum Programming: Kipper
Harmonica: Stevie Wonder
Guitars: Dominic Miller
Drums: Vinnie Colaiuta, Manu Katché
Piano, Clavinet: Jason Rebello
Clarinet: Branford Marsalis
Trumpet: Chris Botti
Percussion: Mino Cinelu
Hammond Organ: Don Blackman, Dave Hartley
Pedal Steel Guitar: B.J. Cole
Northumbrian Pipes and Fiddle: Katherine Tickell
Backing Vocals: Tawatha Agee, Dennis Collins, Joe Mendez, Janice Pendarvis, Althea Rodgers, Marlon Saunders, Veneese Thomas, Darryl Tookes, Ken Williams

DESERT ROSE
Produced by Dave Audé
Additional programming and arranging by Dave Audé
Additional production by Jason Robinson
Engineered by Dave Audé
Original elements produced by Sting and Kipper
Vocals, Bass, Vg-8 Guitar Synth: Sting
Vocals: Cheb Mami
Keyboards, Drum Programming: Kipper
Guitars: Dominic Miller
Drums: Vinnie Colaiuta, Manu Katché
Piano, Clavinet: Jason Rebello
Clarinet: Branford Marsalis
Trumpet: Chris Botti
Percussion: Mino Cinelu
Hammond Organ: Don Blackman, Dave Hartley
Pedal Steel Guitar: B.J. Cole
Northumbrian Pipes and Fiddle: Katherine Tickell
Backing Vocals: Tawatha Agee, Dennis Collins, Joe Mendez, Janice Pendarvis, Althea Rodgers, Marlon Saunders, Veneese Thomas, Darryl Tookes, Ken Williams
Darbouka: Ettamri Mustapha
String Arrangement Conductor / Leader: Farhat Boullagui
String Players: Moulay Ahmed, Kouider Berkan, Salem Bnouni, Sameh Catalan

IF YOU LOVE SOMEBODY SET THEM FREE
Produced by Dave Audé
Additional programming and arranging by Dave Audé
Additional production by Jason Robinson
Engineered by Dave Audé
Original elements produced by Sting and Pete Smith
Vocals, Guitar: Sting
Bass: Darryl Jones
Drums: Omar Hakim
Keyboards: Kenny Kirkland
Saxophones, Miscellaneous Percussion: Branford Marsalis
Synclavier: Daniel Quatrochi
Backing Vocals: Jane Alexander, Stephanie Crewdson, Vic Garbarini, Elliot Jones, Dolette McDonald, The Nannies Chorus, Janice Pendarvis, Rosemary Purt, Daniel Quatrochi, Pete Smith, Joe Sumner, Kate Sumner, Mickey Sumner

EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Engineered by Robert Orton, Tony Lake, Martin Kierszenbaum and Grant Valentine
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitars: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Piano, Keyboards: Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded at Sear Sound (New York, NY) and The Village (Los Angeles, CA)

DEMOLITION MAN
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Engineered by Tony Lake
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitar: Dominic Miller
Drums: Vinnie Colaiuta
Organ: Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded at Avatar (New York, NY)

CAN'T STAND LOSING YOU
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Engineered by Tony Lake, Martin Kierszenbaum and Grant Valentine
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitars: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Organ: Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded at Sear Sound (New York, NY) and Ocean Way (Nashville, TN)

FIELDS OF GOLD
Produced by Jerry Fuentes
Additional production by Martin Kierszenbaum
Engineered by Jerry Fuentes and Tony Lake
Original elements produced by Sting and Hugh Padgham
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitars: Dominic Miller, Jerry Fuentes
Drums: Vinnie Colaiuta
Keyboards: David Sancious
Backing Vocals: Jerry Fuentes
Recorded at Melt My Mind Studios (Nashville, TN)

SO LONELY
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum and Jerry Fuentes
Engineered by Tony Lake, Martin Kierszenbaum and Jerry Fuentes
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitar, Bass: Jerry Fuentes
Drums: Josh Freese
Organ: Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded at Sear Sound (New York, NY), Ocean Way (Nashville, TN), Cherrytree Recording Studios (Los Angeles, CA), and Melt My Mind Studios (Nashville, TN)

SHAPE OF MY HEART
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Engineered by Tony Lake
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitars: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Keyboards: Kevon Webster
Percussion: Tony Lake
Backing Vocals: Melissa Musique, Gene Noble
Recorded at The Village (Los Angeles, CA)

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Engineered by Robert Orton and Tony Lake
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitars: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Organ: Martin Kierszenbaum
Backing Vocals: The Last Bandoleros (Jerry Fuentes, Derek James, Diego Navaira, Emilio Navaira)
Recorded at Sear Sound (New York, NY) and The Village (Los Angeles, CA)

FRAGILE
Produced by Dave Audé
Sting's vocals produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Additional programming and arranging by Dave Audé
Additional production by Jason Robinson
Engineered by Dave Audé and Tony Lake
Original elements produced by Sting and Neil Dorfsman
Vocals, Bass, Guitar: Sting
Drums: Manu Katché
Keyboards: Kenny Kirkland
Percussion, Vocorder: Mino Cinelu
Saxophone: Branford Marsalis
Additional Drums: Andy Newmark
Backing Vocals: Renee Geyer, Dolette McDonald, Janice Pendarvis, Vesta Williams

WALKING ON THE MOON
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Engineered by Tony Lake, Martin Kierszenbaum and Grant Valentine
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitars: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Recorded at Sear Sound (New York, NY) and Ocean Way (Nashville, TN)

ENGLISHMAN IN NEW YORK
Produced by Dave Audé
Sting's vocals produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Additional programming and arranging by Dave Audé
Additional production by Jason Robinson
Engineered by Dave Audé and Tony Lake
Original elements produced by Sting and Neil Dorfsman
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Drums: Manu Katché
Keyboards: Kenny Kirkland
Percussion, Vocorder: Mino Cinelu
Saxophone: Branford Marsalis
Additional Drums: Andy Newmark
Backing Vocals: Renee Geyer, Dolette McDonald, Janice Pendarvis, Vesta Williams

IF I EVER LOSE MY FAITH IN YOU
Produced by Dave Audé
Sting's vocals produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Additional programming and arranging by Dave Audé
Additional production by Jason Robinson
Engineered by Dave Audé and Tony Lake
Original elements produced by Sting and Hugh Padgham
Vocals, Bass, Harmonica, Saxophone: Sting
Guitars: Dominic Miller
Keyboards: David Sancious
Drums: Vinnie Colaiuta
Chromatic Harmonica: Larry Adler
Trumpet: John Barclay, Guy Barker
Cello: Sian Bell
Viola: James Boyd
Trombone: Richard Edwards, Mark Nightingale
Violin: Simon Fischer, Kathryn Greeley
Narration: David Foxxe
Pedal Steel Player: Paul Franklin
Flute: Dave Heath
Northumbrian Pipes, Fiddle: Kathryn Tickell
Strings: Danny Dunlap

ROXANNE [LIVE]
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded by Howard Page at the Olympia, Paris
Additional engineering by Robert Orton
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitars, Vocals: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Backing Vocals, Percussion: Jerry Fuentes
Backing Vocals: Joe Sumner, Diego Navaira

SYNCHRONICITY II [LIVE]
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded by Howard Page at the Olympia, Paris
Additional engineering by Robert Orton
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitar, Vocals: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Backing Vocals, Percussion: Jerry Fuentes
Backing Vocals: Joe Sumner, Diego Navaira

NEXT TO YOU [LIVE]
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded by Howard Page at the Olympia, Paris
Additional engineering by Robert Orton
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitar, Vocals: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Percussion: Jerry Fuentes, Emilio Navaira, Joe Sumner
Backing Vocals: Joe Sumner, The Last Bandoleros (Jerry Fuentes, Derek James, Diego Navaira, Emilio Navaira)
Accordian: Percy Cardona

SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD [LIVE]
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded by Howard Page at the Olympia, Paris
Additional engineering by Robert Orton
Vocals, Bass: Sting
Guitar, Vocals: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Backing Vocals, Percussion: Jerry Fuentes
Backing Vocals: Joe Sumner, Diego Navaira

FRAGILE [LIVE]
Produced by Martin Kierszenbaum
Recorded by Howard Page at the Olympia, Paris
Additional engineering by Robert Orton
Vocals, Guitar: Sting
Guitar, Vocals: Dominic Miller, Rufus Miller
Drums: Josh Freese
Backing Vocals, Percussion: Jerry Fuentes
Backing Vocals: Joe Sumner, Diego Navaira

PRODUCED BY MARTIN KIERSZENBAUM, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

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The Last Bandoleros appear courtesy of Warner Music Nashville.

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